



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Art Unit : 1742  
Examiner : Sikyin Ip  
Serial No. : 09/937,889  
Filed : October 2, 2001  
Inventors : Akio Tosaka  
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: Yoichi Tominaga  
: Noriyuki Katayama  
: Nobutaka Kurosawa  
: Kei Sakata  
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Title : HIGH TENSILE HOT-ROLLED STEEL SHEET  
: HAVING EXCELLENT STRAIN AGING  
: HARDENING PROPERTIES AND METHOD  
: FOR PRODUCING THE SAME

Customer No: 035811  
Docket No.: 1307-01  
Confirmation No.: 8803

Dated: April 4, 2005

**RESPONSE**

**Mail Stop AF**

Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

This is submitted in response to the Official Action dated December 17, 2004.

The Applicants acknowledge the rejection of Claims 1 – 5, 10, 12 and 14 – 15 under 35 U.S.C. §103 over the hypothetical combination of Tosaka with Maid. The Applicants respectfully submit that the solicited claims are patentable since one of ordinary skill in the art would not make the hypothetical combination and because, even if the hypothetical combination were to be made, the resulting steels would still fail to teach or suggest the subject matter of the solicited claims. Detailed reasoning is set forth below.

First, the Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's helpful and detailed comments in support of the rejection. The Applicants note in particular the Examiner's frank acknowledgment that Maid does not disclose the claimed N/Al ratio, the amount of dissolved N in the steel and the ferrite grain size. The Applicants respectfully submit that Maid also fails to disclose "less than